Dear Jim, Pete

12/21/74

Here is a copy of a nice and rather longish letter I got from Peter Kihss today and my reply. I read his letter when it came, after lunch, and have been doing other things so perhaps parts are not in mind. However, several are clear and one will require some explaining. This is the first time Pete has sent me a letter after getting a book. He's always phoned. And it has changed his view somewhat.

If you want to understand thelatter point better, when Jerry phones ask him what Pete had decided. This letter backs off that. It really reflects what is not uncommon with reporters who are good reporters and decent, honest men: he's agonizing.

There is really also an evaluation of the effectiveness of the book and the format, using all those documents. I find it encouraging.

Over the years I had a notion that the Times was following behind me. I know that with WW II they did because I as much as invited it with a meeting with Salisbury and later with the crew he put to work, of whom Pete was one. I met with all but Corry. The manner of Roberts and Handler left little doubt that they would succeed in finding nothing, not even with this work as an index. Roberts was their Archives man. He is an expert at not finding when the cause requires it. He is one of those who bought the Oswald-rifle picture, for the Detroit paper he then worked for. Pete here goes a little farthur in crediting me than I'd known.

I've not heard from Waldron in some time and I suppose he now wants to be with his family, so I made the suggestion to Pete on the chance he would approach someone on the Sunday mag to try to interest them in your essay.

The suggestion on the Supreme Court situation on Ray/discovery will, if he makes it,carry more weight than if we make an approach. He may or may not. I came as close as I felt I could to asking him.

Certainly Weaver had no interest when we spoke to him. If you've forgotten, I phoned him from your home when the habeas corpus petition was filed. No story.

Martin's stories were the kind that the Times prints. Those who work for the Times will know that there is more, so I think there is a chance. I'm sure that Weaver read those stories because that is his beat.

The story he sent me is the Times' morgue copy so in time I'll want it back. It is not the story from the final edition. You have that. It is two columns wide and I think maybe a little shorter. The end of both is different than the typed AP wire copy of which you have a copy, so it is a later version than the one you've just returned.

I don't think it will comfort him because I don't think he wants to be comforted, but casual reference to this might at least encourage Koch a little. Maybe he can come to see that if it is the disaster he conceives it is also a disaster that is not without some effect.

Whatever his response, if any, I'll let you know, of course. It is not at all unlikely that he knows people on the magazine. I think the problem there will be the involvement of assassinations in FOI, not now FOI. Regardless of who edits, it has always supported the official fiction. It has had many such stories but not one other than endorsement of officialdom.

Best,